described is probably less than seventy. Of these, two-thirds, as far as known, do not occur outside the tropics, and most of them have been described from one or two specimens collected by exploring expeditions, or individual explorers. It is thus impossible to obtain facts relative to their distribution. In the majority of cases, however, where any allusion is made to their odor, they are stated to be extremely fetid, and it is usually recorded of such species, too, that flies were observed eating their ill-smelling hymenium. In the cases of one or two Javanese species we are told that they were found growing on bamboo in the vicinity of the cottages of the natives. In some of these tropical genera the forms are extremely elegant; and especially is this the case in the genus *Aseroë*, the receptacle of which is divided into beautifully stellate, brilliantly colored rays. In most of the species of this genus the loathsome sporiferous substance is comparatively small in quantity, and in order to ensure of this being dispersed by insect agency, it would seem that this lack of quantity were compensated for by the bright conspicuous colors and the attractive forms that the plants assume. I was once asked by a friend who brought me the unexpanded volva of a *Phallus* as the supposed cause of an intolerable stench which proceeded from beneath a porch in front of his house, and which had caused his family great annoyance: "What good are these things; and, having such a vile odor, why do they remind us of it by so persistently thrusting themselves beneath our very noses?" The first question, in the present state of our knowledge, would be difficult to answer. So far as we know, these plants are of no practical use to man—being fit neither for food nor medicine; and, from an æsthetical standpoint, the species of the temperate zones, at least, have little to recommend them to the sense of sight, as most certainly they have nothing to commend them to that of smell.

The second question, I think has been sufficiently answered; although, in connection therewith, I may repeat what has often been remarked before, that the fragrant odors or the vile smells possessed by plants have been assumed by the latter with no reference whatever to man's delectation or annoyance, but, on the contrary, that they may prove advantageous to the plants themselves. It was probably with a feeling (shared by so many) that all things have been created for man's benefit alone, that led Bernardin de Saint-Pierre to write: "Plants which exhale delicious perfumes are of low stature in order that man may respire them." But Saint-Pierre, in his conceit, overlooked the magnolias, the honey-locusts, and a host of other trees which bear their fragrant blossoms way up out of man's reach.

W. R. G.

§ 28. **The North-Jersey Botanical Club.**—The regular monthly meeting of the North-Jersey Botanical Club, was held on Saturday, March 13th, in the High School building at Montclair. Twenty-four new members were elected. The following officers were chosen for the ensuing year: President, Henry H. Rusby; Vice-President, Miss H. Adelaide Shibley; Secretary, Walter M. Wolfe; Treasurer, George O. F. Taylor; Curator, Charles M. Davis; Executive Committee, the President and Secretary *ex-officio*, Chas. M. Davis, Randall Spaulding and Miss Nellie F. Bradford.

After the transaction of the regular business, at which it was resolved to purchase for the library Gray's Synoptical Flora of North America, and a set of the Pacific Railroad Reports, the Club went into session as a class and discussed the subject of "Leaves." A large part of the members being beginners in the study, these classes have been organized for their accommodation. The classes meet weekly, one in Montclair, one in Bloomfield, and the third in Orange.

Montclair, N. J. WALTER M. WOLFE, *Sec'ty.*

§ 29. **Botanical News.**—In a note published in the *Cronica Cientifica* (Barcelona) of Jan. 10th, a writer, Sr. Bofill, calls attention to a recently issued work by Sr. D. Estanislas Vayreda on the "Noteworthy Plants of Catalonia," in which the author asserts that the viscid secretion which invests the internodes of the stem of *Silene crassicaulis*, Willk. and Costa, (as also, to a less degree, those of *S. inaperta*, L., *S. nutans*, L., and a few other species) has the property not only of capturing such insects as come in contact with it (whence the English name "Catchfly"), but also of dissolving the soft portions of their bodies; and that these plants might therefore be considered truly insectivorous. Has it ever been noticed that our more viscid American species of "Catchfly" (*S. Pennsyvanicum*, for example) possess any such digestive properties?

The January number of the *Revue Mycologique*, which now includes in its scope the subject of lichenology, contains articles by the editor on *Rupinia Baylacii;* the *Peronospora* of the Vine; an Unexpected Occurrence of the White Variety of *Cantharellus aurantiacus; Agaricus campestris* and its Numerous Varieties; the Anomalies exhibited by *Agaricus acerbus and equestris;* and a Revision of the "Reliquiœ Libertianæ." Dr. Passerini describes 18 new species of Italian fungi; Baron Thümen contributes a second decade of exotic fungi; and Dr. Müller gives an enumeration of all the Egyptian lichens that are known up to the present time. The remainder of the number is taken up with the bibliography of fungi and lichens. It would prove a great convenience to readers if M. Roumeguère should have his *Revue* stitched instead of issuing it, as at present, in loose sheets.

In the February number of the *Botanical Gazette*, Prof. Thos. C. Porter contributes a note on *Viola tricolor* var. *arvensis*, in which he urges that this plant has strong claims to be regarded as a native. In fact, the evidence in favor of such a view seems to be gradually increasing. We know of at least one New York station for this violet whither it is impossible that it could have escaped from a garden. Under the name of *Viola tenella* the plant figures in Dr. Torrey's list of plants collected by Dr. James during Long's Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1820. It was found growing along the Missouri in a district of country which at that early period must have been a wilderness. The other original notes in the *Gazette* are on *Lepidium campestre*, by Rev. S. Lockwood: on *Asplenium Bradleyi*, by Prof. F. L. Harvey: Bursting of the Fruit of *Euphorbia corollata*, by W. C. White; and a Reply to Mr. Meehan's Criticisms, by M. E. Jones. In these notes Mr. Jones modifies his opinion expressed in a former